

NSC BRIEFING

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CUBA

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- I. Fidel Castro's rapid concentration of Cuba's political and economic sources of control in the hands of a radical and authoritarian clique has been marked by deep and increasing Communist influences.
    - A. He has flaunted his willingness to deal with both Cuban Communists and the Sino-Soviet bloc, evidently because he regards them as helpful and reliable allies in achieving his objectives.
    - B. Communists are deeply involved in the remodeling of Cuba.
    - C. Cuba has become a base for communism in Latin America.
    - D. The outlook is for Castro's increased dependence on Communists.
  - II. We are unable to answer the question: "Is Fidel Castro a Communist?"
    - A. Given the common interests of Castro and the Cuban Communists, it is difficult, and in most respects academic to try to distinguish the policies of the Castro regime from those which would be expected of a government under actual Communist control.
    - B. If present trends continue, the Communists will gain de facto control of the Castro regime, and are near this point now.
  - III. Although there is a growing number of Cubans who oppose the regime on various grounds, they are confused and intimidated.
    - A. Besides middle class and propertied groups, they include moderates who were early Castro supporters.
    - B. This internal opposition fears the regime's increasingly efficient internal political intelligence network.
    - C. The Church, as such, remains inactive, though individual churchmen have publicly criticized Communist influence in the regime.

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- IV. The regime's moves in every field of activity demonstrate a determination rapidly to reorganize all Cubans into tightly knit groups under close government direction and control.
- A. Communists have been particularly active in these efforts.
  - B. The National Agrarian Reform Institute, headed by Nunez Jiminez (Noon'-yes Him-ain'-es), almost certainly a Communist, is probably the most powerful example of Castro's policies and pervasive control.
- V. The economic situation, although deteriorating in some sectors, has temporarily improved in others. This is in great part due to prompt bloc economic assistance, land and business expropriations, and an expansion in the production of foodstuffs.
- A. The economy will probably not cause serious political problems during 1960.
  - B. The outlook for private ownership remains dismal in view of the increasing state direction of the economy.
- VI. Castro has implemented successfully his violently anti-US economic and political policies.
- A. This is demonstrated by the speed and effectiveness with which Castro officials apparently acted to ensure Cuba's petroleum supply when Western oil companies did not cooperate.
    - 1. Castro is almost certain to seize their refineries.
- VII. Most Latin American governments are concerned over Cuban meddling in their internal affairs and oppose Castro's methods.
- A. However, they hesitate to criticize Castro's regime because of his popularity among some politically important groups in their countries.

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VIII. Cuba's political and economic ties with the Sino-Soviet bloc, at first apparently motivated by defiance of the US, have fast become the basis of Castro's foreign relations.

A. Relations with the USSR, Czechoslovakia and Poland were announced in May and June.

1. Recognition of other bloc countries, including Communist China and possibly East Germany, is likely.

B. Cuba will probably support any effort to seat the Peiping government in the UN this fall.

1. It will also implement its agreement with the USSR to "collaborate actively" in the UN on certain issues.

C. Agreements for trade, technical assistance, and \$120 million worth of credits have been signed since the first of the year with USSR, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and East Germany. Agreements with Bulgaria and other Communist countries are also in prospect.

1. There are sizeable numbers of bloc economic specialists and technicians in Cuba and the various agreements will all probably be rapidly implemented, as the Soviet agreement already is.

D. Castro and Khrushchev may be working out arrangements for an exchange of visits.

1. According to TASS, agrarian reform director Nunez Jimenez (Noon'-yes Him-ain'-es) said in Moscow on 17 June that Castro will accept Mikoyan's February invitation to visit Moscow, but he specified no date.

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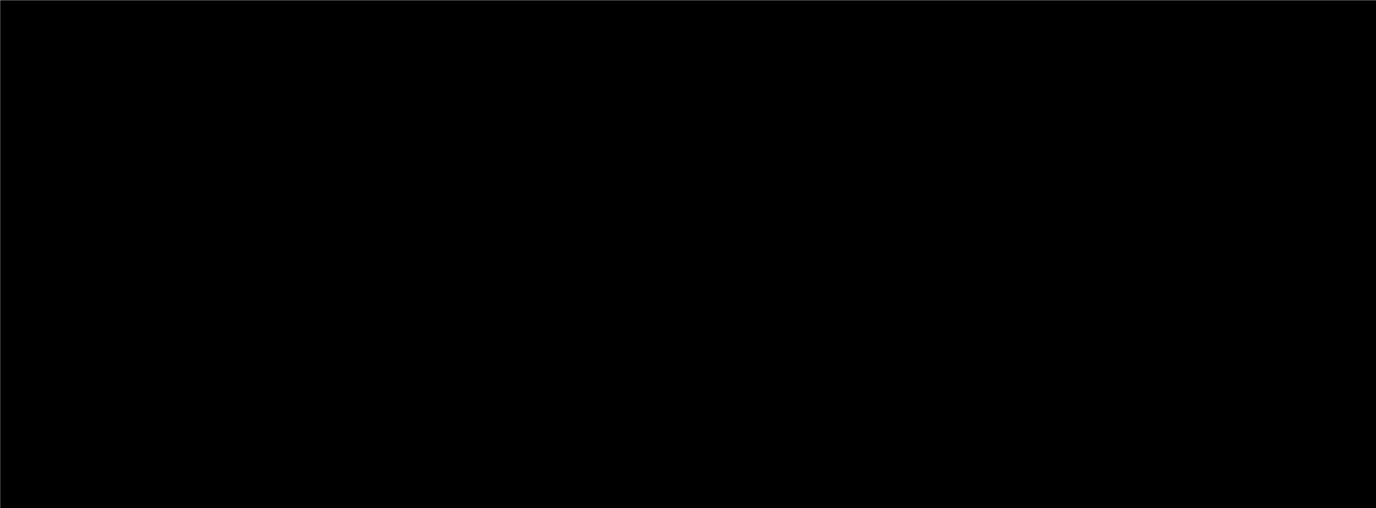
2. TASS also quoted Nunez as hoping Khrushchev's intended visit to Cuba will come on 26 July, anniversary of Castro's revolutionary movement.

E. Communist China is making a greater play for Cuba than for any other Latin American country.

1. Peiping and Havana have exchanged cultural groups, and the Peiping Opera Troupe is still in Cuba.
2. There is formal collaboration between the official Cuban and Chinese news agencies.
3. In its broadcasts to Latin America, the Peiping radio gives very strong propaganda support to Castro.
4. The inspector general of the Cuban army was feted in China (as well as in North Viet Nam) during a tour of the bloc.
5. An unknown but probably sizeable number of Cuban Communists are undergoing party training in China.

IX. The Soviet Embassy in Cuba may play an important role in Soviet espionage.

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- X. There is no firm evidence that military agreements have been concluded with the Bloc, but the possibility remains that the bloc has agreed to provide Cuba with some military equipment.

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